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## Did Prophet Yūsuf (عليه السلام) Rule by Kufr?

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Is it correct to say that the position Prophet Yūsuf (عليه السلام) occupied was in a non-Islamic government and that it involved ruling / legislating with other than what Allāh revealed?

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*Say: 'This is my way; I invite unto Allah with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me. Glorified and Exalted is Allah! And I will never be of the polytheists.'*

[Sūrat Yūsuf, 'Āyah 108]

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
الحمد لله، والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله، وعلى آله الطيبين الطاهرين، وصحابته المخلصين المجاهدين

*In the name of Allāh the Most Gratuitous Most Merciful.  
Praise is to Allāh, Peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allāh.*

## Introduction: The Importance of the Shari'ah

*Islām* is the *Deen* that is revealed by *Allāh ta 'ala* to the last of all Prophets and Messengers, Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. *Islām* means to submit and totally surrender to *Allāh ta 'ala* exclusively, in obedience that is based upon love, reverence and complete disavowal from disbelief, polytheism, rivals and false deities. *Islām* must be implemented in full and must be applied immediately and it is prohibited to apply it in stages. This is valid eternally, especially after *Allāh ta 'ala*'s stated:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ

**“This day have I perfected your Deen (way of life, religion) for you.”<sup>1</sup>**

All aspects of the *Shari'ah* must be implemented in their entirety. This includes rules pertaining to *'Aqā'id*, penalties, moral values, societal transactions, economics, the ruling system and the like. None of these rulings are limited to a particular time period. In other words, the claim that such rulings no longer apply in the 'modern age' is totally false. Admittedly, the implementation will be according to ability, but the rule is still applicable. There is no difference from *Ĥukm* to *Ĥukm*; why should *Ṣalāt* be performed in its legal way and not avoiding usury? Didn't *Allāh* command us to obey Him and His Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم in the broadest of terms? In truth, this distinction that is often made has no evidential basis within our Islamic *Shari'ah* whatsoever.

Not only is *Islām* far superior to all the insidious false creeds born of *Tāghūt*, but it also is above the *Shari'ah* of the previous Prophets. *Imām* Ahmed recorded a narration from Jābir Ibn Abdullah that 'Umar Ibn Al- Khaṭṭāb came to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم with a book that he took from some of the *Ahl-ul-Kitab*. 'Umar began reading it to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who became angry. He صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

*“Are you uncertain about it Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb? By the One in whose hand is my soul! I have come to you with it white and pure. Do not ask them about anything, for they*

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<sup>1</sup> *Sūrat Al-Ma'idah*: 3

*might tell you something true and you reject it, or they might tell you something false and you believe it. By the One in whose hand is my soul! If Mūsa (Alayhi Sallām) were living, he would have no choice but to follow me”.*<sup>2</sup>

Imām Ahmed also recorded a narration from Abdullah Ibn Thābit who said: ‘Umar came to Allāh’s Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم and said: ‘Oh Messenger of Allāh! I passed by a brother of mine from [the tribe of] Qurayzah, so he wrote some comprehensive statements from the Torah for me, should I read them to you?’ The face of Allāh’s Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم changed [with anger]. So I said to him, “Don’t you see the face of Allāh’s Messenger?” ‘Umar said: “We are pleased with Allāh as our Lord, Islām as our *Deen*, and Muhammad as our Messenger.” So the anger of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم subsided, and he said:

*By the One in whose hand is Muhammad’s soul, if Mūsa appeared among you and you were to follow him, abandoning me, then you would have strayed. Indeed you are my share of the nations, and I am your share of the Prophets.*<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Tafseer Ibn Kathūr*, Vol. 5, pp. 135 / 136 [English Translation, Dar-us-Salam Publishers, 2000]

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

## The Argument(s) Presented Concerning Yūsuf

One of the *Shub'ḥāt*<sup>4</sup> that the deviants use concerns the actions of the Prophet Yūsuf عليه السلام. It is claimed that the Prophet Yūsuf عليه السلام accepted to work in the government of the King of Egypt and that he (عليه السلام) agreed to work under the authority of the King who was not from the *Ahlul-Kitāb* and the society was polytheist. It is also advanced that this work involved ruling and/or legislation with other than what *Allāh* has revealed. Based upon this assumption, the argument is advanced that as a result of Yūsuf's عليه السلام actions, *Islām* permits *Muslims* to work and participate in a non-Islamic government / ruling system. Very often this argument is presented to advance other forms of participation in non-Islamic systems, such as voting for non-Islamic political parties in general elections and even electing members of parliament and participating in making legislation.<sup>5</sup>

The natural corollary to this argument is that *Muslims* must accept the present political status-quo generally, and in the West, integrate into the system in order to survive and prosper. In other words, the advocates of this *Shub'ḥā* would have *Islām* diluted and confined within present political, social, economic and international status quo; asserting the notion that *Islām* must change to fit in with modernity and contemporary trends instead of the reverse taking hold. It is important to note that when this argument is presented it is not done so after an exhaustive study of the Islamic texts. Rather, the conclusion is formed in advance (namely it is permissible to partake in all forms of non-Islamic government) and then rhetoric is advanced to support this line of argumentation with a skewed understanding of Islamic sources and texts.

Consequently, there is a need to dissect this argument in order to remove this deviant *Shub'ḥā* advocated by pseudo-*Muslims* so that the *Muslim* public becomes fully aware of its contents and what the divine sources actually have to say upon the matter. At this juncture it is important to reiterate what *Allāh* states in the Glorious *Qu'rān*, and bear the words of our *Rabb* in mind when considering this matter, for *Allāh* has declared:

وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ

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<sup>4</sup> Sophism. Sophistry refers to the itinerant and professional teaching of the art of rhetoric, hence the word 'sophism,' which is used to describe a spurious but very deceptive argument, or form of argumentation.

<sup>5</sup> Another modern addition to this argument is that Muslims are compelled to participate within the prevalent non-Islamic structures lest we do not 'have a voice.'

**“Do not mix up truth with falsehood...”<sup>6</sup>**

Commenting upon this verse, *Imām al-Qurtubi* has stated:

*A thing is mixed up when it is mixed with something similar to it. Then it is not clear. Qatāda said that the meaning of the phrase is: “do not mix up Judaism and Christianity with Islām”. The word used for falsehood is ‘Bātil’ which means when something becomes unsound and worthless. It can also mean ‘in vain.’ The False (Al-Bātil) is one of the names of Shayṭān. A hero is also called Batil using the same root, because he makes the courage of his opponent ‘in vain.’*

*Interpreters disagree about what is meant by ‘truth with falsehood.’ Ibn ‘Abbās and others said that it means do not mix what you have of the truth in the Book with falsehood by alteration and substitution. The Jews said, ‘Muhammad, may Allāh bless him and grant him peace, was sent, but not to us’. So their affirmation of his mission was the truth but their denial that he was sent to them was falsehood. Ibn Zayd said that what was meant by the truth was the Torah, and the falsehood was the changes they made to it. Ibn ‘Abbās’ statement is the most correct because it is general and so includes all the other statements.<sup>7</sup>*

And *Allāh ta ‘ala* says:

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿١٦٠﴾

**“And whoever seeks a religion other than *Islām*, it will not be accepted from him and he will be one of the losers in the world to come”<sup>8</sup>.**

And *Allah ta ala* also says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِيَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ﴿٥٩﴾

**Oh you who believe! Obey *Allāh* and obey the Messenger and those in authority amongst you. (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to *Allāh***

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<sup>6</sup> *Sūrat Baqarah*: 42

<sup>7</sup> *Tafseer al-Qurtubi*, Vol. 1, pp. 233 / 234 [English Translation, Dar al-Taqwa, 2003]

<sup>8</sup> *Sūrat al-Imrān*: 85

**and His Messenger, if you believe in *Allāh* and the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.”<sup>9</sup>**

Regarding this verse, *Imām Ibn Kathīr* noted in his *Tafseer*:

*Mujāhid and several others among the Salaf said that the ‘Āyah means, ‘(Refer) to the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ.’ This is a command from Allāh that whatever areas the people dispute about, whether major or minor areas of the Deen, they are required to refer to the Qur’ān and Sunnah for judgment concerning these disputes. Therefore, whatever the Book and Sunnah decide and testify to the truth of, then it is the plain truth. What is beyond truth, save falsehood?10*

Hence we proceed from this basis. The *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah* remain our constant reference point which we must refer all matters for judgment including this one under consideration.

The story of Yūsuf عليه السلام has been expounded beautifully in the *Qur’ān* in chapter 12. However, from the outset, it must be iterated that there isn’t a consensus amongst the classical *‘Ulema* concerning a number of critical points in the narrative about Yūsuf عليه السلام. Such points are presented and misinterpreted contemporarily by those of a deviant sophist inclination. Moreover, when the argument of Yūsuf عليه السلام is marshaled to justify their own corrupt actions and ideas, they fail to mention this critical point, as we shall elaborate upon with the help, permission and mercy of *Allāh Azzah Wa Jal*.

How do we therefore proceed with the matter of Yūsuf عليه السلام knowing *a priori* that the classical *‘Ulema* were not in complete agreement with regards to key details in the narrative? As previously mentioned, the answer lies in reference back to the *Kitāb* and *Sunnah*. *Allāh ta ‘ala* has informed us:

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<sup>9</sup> *Sūrat an-Nis’a*: 59

<sup>10</sup> *Tafseer Ibn Kathīr*, Vol. 2, p. 498

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَبَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ ءَامَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٧﴾

**It is He who has sent down to you the Book. In it are verses that are entirely clear, they are the foundations of the Book; and others are not entirely clear. So as for those in whose hearts there is a deviation (from the truth) they follow (only) that which is not entirely clear thereof, seeking *al-Fitnah* and seeking its *Ta'weel*, but none knows its *Ta'weel* except *Allāh*. And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: 'We believe in it; all of it is from our Lord.' And none receive admonition except men of understanding".<sup>11</sup>**

Thus with the words and guidance of *Allāh ta 'ala* we can proceed. We are informed in the aforesaid verse that within the *Qur'ān* there are verses that are *Muhkamāt* (that is, clearly established) which are the foundations of the book, and those that are *Mutashābihāt*, that is, not entirely clear to all. Consequently, the correct manner to proceed is to refer to *Muhkamāt* in order to understand the *Mutashābihāt*. Those seeking to only refer to the *Mutashābihāt* in order to present false or even warped interpenetrations without due regard to the *Muhkamāt*, are strongly reprimanded in this noble verse. Their intention is to try and misguide using the *Qur'ān* itself; may *Allāh ta 'ala* protect us from this.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Sūrat Al-Imrān*: 7

<sup>12</sup> *Tafseer Ibn Kathīr*, Vol. 2, pp. 111 - 118. For greater clarity and further discussion regarding this verse, its implications and application, kindly refer to other classical scholars of repute such as the works of *Tafseer* by *Imām Ibn Jarīr at-Tabarī*.



## The Prophet hood of Yūsuf عليه السلام

Upon detailed perusal of the evidences contained in the Divine texts, we know definitively that Yūsuf عليه السلام was a Prophet of *Allāh* and completely rejected all forms of *Tāghūt*. Is it even conceivable that a noble Prophet, purified from all evil would call the people of his time to a *Deen* or law not sanctioned by *Allāh*? Of course not! Such a suggestion would not simply be an absurdity, but also a statement of disbelief. *Allāh* has informed us that his noble Prophet was steadfast, be that in a position of adversity or strength. We are informed that Yūsuf عليه السلام said:

إِنِّي تَرَكْتُ مِلَّةَ قَوْمٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ كَافِرُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾  
وَاتَّبَعْتُ مِلَّةَ آبَائِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ ۚ مَا كَانَ لَنَا أَنْ نَشْرِكَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۚ ذَلِكَ  
مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

“Verily I have abandoned the religion of a people that didn’t believe in Allah and that (even) deny the Hereafter. And I follow the ways of my father’s – Ibra’heem, Ishāq, and Yaqūb; and never could we attribute any partners whatsoever to Allāh: that (comes) of the grace of *Allāh* to us and to mankind: yet most men are not grateful”.<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore, we are informed of the conversation that Yūsuf عليه السلام had in prison with two others. He (عليه السلام) stated quite clearly:

يَصْنَعِي السِّجْنِ ۚ أَرْبَابٌ مُتَفَرِّقُونَ خَيْرٌ أَمِ اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ ﴿٨١﴾ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ ۚ  
إِلَّا أَسمَاءَ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنْتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمْ مِمَّا أُنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَِا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ ۚ إِنَّ الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ ۚ أَمَرَ آلَا  
تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ ۚ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

“Oh my two companions of the prison! (I ask you): are many lords differing among themselves better, or the One *Allāh*, Supreme and Irresistible. If not Him, you worship nothing but names which you have named, - you and your fathers, - for which *Allāh* has sent down no authority: Ruling (Legislating, Governing, Judging, Commanding etc.) is for none but Allāh: He has commanded that you worship none but Him: that is the right Deen but most men know not”.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Sūrat Yūsuf: 37 / 38

From the text it is clear that Yūsuf عليه السلام was steadfast to the command of *Allāh*, whether in adversity or strength. Yūsuf عليه السلام called the companions of the prison to *At-Tawheed*, mentioning clearly that ruling is for none but *Allāh* and the command to worship none but Him without partners, rivals or associates. To claim that Yūsuf عليه السلام subsequently went on to partake in ruling or legislating by reference to *Ṭāghūt* is a grave crime, contradicting the words of Yūsuf عليه السلام himself, and the other evidences revealed in the *Qur'ān* concerning this matter. People who follow their desires and turn away from the 'Āyat's of *Allāh* are all eventually exposed and brought forth in the end; for *Allāh ta 'ala* says about them:

يُرِيدُونَ أَن يُتَحَاكَمُوا إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ وَقَدْ أُمِرُوا أَن يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ ۚ وَيُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَن يُضِلَّهُمْ ضَلَالًا  
بَعِيدًا ﴿٦٠﴾

**“...their (real) wish is to go for judgment (in their disputes) to the *Ṭāghūt* when they have been ordered to reject (renounce / disbelieve) them. *Shayṭān* would mislead them far astray!”<sup>15</sup>**

In modern political systems, an individual usually takes an oath of allegiance (either to the state, head of state, the constitution etc) before assuming office, whether that be as part of the executive or legislature. Such oaths involve a commitment to uphold, defend and implement the prevailing system. Can we even dare to attribute this *Kufr* to Yūsuf عليه السلام when *Allāh ta 'ala* has plainly informed us that:

كَذَلِكَ لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ السُّوءَ وَالْفَحْشَاءَ ۚ إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

**“...thus (did We order) that We might turn away from him (all) evil and shameful deeds: for he was one of Our servants, sincere and purified”<sup>16</sup>**

And *Allāh ta 'ala* said:

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<sup>14</sup> *Sūrat Yūsuf*: 39 / 40

<sup>15</sup> *Sūrat An-Nisa'a*: 60

<sup>16</sup> *Sūrat Yūsuf*: 24

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ

“And We have indeed sent to every nation a messenger (saying to his people): ‘Worship *Allāh* alone and avoid the *Tāghūt* (false deities).”<sup>17</sup>

The ayah in *Sūrat An-Nahl* affirms the fundamental principle that all Prophets and Messengers in essence called their peoples to worship *Allāh* and reject all forms of *Tāghūt*. Yūsuf عليه السلام was of this ilk, just like all of the other Prophets may *Allāh ta ‘ala* send His peace and blessings upon them all.

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<sup>17</sup> *Sūrat An-Nahl*: 36

## Yūsuf's عليه السلام Work and Relationship with the King of Egypt

All the intricate details of the reality of the work of Yūsuf عليه السلام and the precise relationship between him and the King of Egypt are not known to us with certainty. As previously stated, the classical scholars of Islam were themselves not in complete agreement and consensus upon this matter either. Thus it is difficult to make a ruling to the level of certainty with regards to this matter. This is in direct conflict with the sophists who present their argument using the example of Yūsuf عليه السلام as if it were decisively clear and known from *Islām* by necessity.

The majority of the classical *Mufasssireen* concluded that the king authorized Yūsuf عليه السلام all powers of ruling and authority within Egypt, keeping only for himself the throne and title. To expound upon this, we refer to the Tafseer of *Imām* Ibn Jarīr At-Tabarī, who relates:

قَالَ أَجْعَلْنِي عَلَى خَزَائِنِ الْأَرْضِ

**“Yūsuf said: "Set me over the store-houses of the land...”<sup>18</sup>**

*And this is a request of Yūsuf to the King to have authority over the food so that the survival of the famine will be controlled. So the King approved of that as I have been informed. Narrated Ibn Wahhab who said Ibn Zayd said:*

قَالَ أَجْعَلْنِي عَلَى خَزَائِنِ الْأَرْضِ

**“Yūsuf said: "Set me over the store-houses of the land...”**

*The Pharaoh gave him (Yūsuf) other stores besides that. And authorized him all authority and gave him the judicial power so that his ruling power is executed. Narrated Ibn Humaid who said Ibra'heem Al-Mukhtār said: "Only the stores of food were given to Yūsuf."*

Here we see that even the early scholars are not in agreement if it was every store and treasury or just the store house of food for the expected famine! At-Tabarī gives an explanation of the words *Hafiz* (guardian) and *'Aleem* (knowledgeable) referred to in *Āyat* 54:

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<sup>18</sup> *Sūrat Yūsuf*: 55

One needs knowledge for accountancy and guardianship for trust worthiness. So this shows that Yūsuf عليه السلام didn't want to be put in charge for power but he knew that as he was receiving revelation he would be the most qualified.

And At-Tabarī continues by mentioning the 'Āyat where Allāh ta 'ala says:

وَكَذَلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَتَّبِعُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ يَشَاءُ ۚ نُصِيبُ بِرَحْمَتِنَا مَنْ نَشَاءُ وَلَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

“Thus did We establish Yūsuf (Joseph) in the land, to take possession therein as, when, or where he pleased. We bestow of our Mercy on whom We please, and We suffer not, to be lost, the reward of those who do good”.<sup>19</sup>

Some narrators gave an explanation where Allāh ta 'ala informs us of the words of Yūsuf عليه السلام:

قَالَ أَجْعَلْنِي عَلَى خَزَائِنِ الْأَرْضِ إِنِّي حَفِيظٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٥﴾

“Yūsuf said: ‘Set me over the store-houses of the land: I will indeed guard them, as one that knows (their importance)’”.<sup>20</sup>

They (the narrators) said the King said “Indeed I do’ and so Yūsuf was allocated the job of ‘Al-Azīz Utfir<sup>21</sup>”.

As-Suddi narrated regarding the statement of Allāh ta 'ala:

وَكَذَلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَتَّبِعُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ يَشَاءُ

“Thus did We establish Yūsuf in the land, to take possession therein as, when, or where he pleased...”.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Sūrat Yūsuf: 56

<sup>20</sup> Sūrat Yūsuf: 55

<sup>21</sup> This is the name the narrators used, but Allāh knows best.

*The King appointed him as the commander of all Egypt so he was the one in charge of buying and selling (commerce) and controlling all affairs. He (Yūsuf) had such a great authority that if it wasn't for his honesty, he could have even removed the King completely.*<sup>23</sup>

According to the last view presented by *Imām at-Tabari*, Yūsuf عليه السلام held a position almost like a modern day Prime Minister. Therefore based upon this opinion Yūsuf عليه السلام was the de facto ruler of Egypt and the King held the position of a constitutional monarch in modern day parlance; a mere figurehead without real executive powers.

From the *Tafseer* of the classical 'Ulema we can discern that there are three different views regarding the position of Yūsuf عليه السلام in Egypt:

- Yūsuf عليه السلام was in charge of the food storage, which is what we understand (literally) from the text of the *Qur'ān*.
- Yūsuf عليه السلام had been given full executive powers within the land and de facto authority to rule Egypt how he saw fit.
- He was given authority of the entire treasury, not only the food storage but also the money, gold, silver, weaponry etc.

All the statements that *At-Tabarī* narrates synchronize more or less with the story of Yūsuf عليه السلام according to the Old Testament in the Bible. It is of note that many of the narrations from *Imām At-Tabari* concerning this matter are from the *Sahābah*, but mostly from *At-Taba'een* and none of them are Prophetic statements coming from the Messenger of *Allāh* صلى الله عليه وسلم, and so are most likely statements that have been derived from the people of the book (*Ah-lil Kitāb*). It is definitely known that the authenticity of the Old Testament in its present format is definitely suspicious so we cannot use it as an infallible reference, but we can use it as an indicator, so will we mention the story for our purposes here.

37. So the advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants

38. And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the spirit of God."

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<sup>22</sup> *Sūrat Yūsuf*: 56

<sup>23</sup> *Tafseer at-Tabarī*, Vol. 13, Pg 3-6.

39. Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Inasmuch as God has shown all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you.

40. "You shall be over my house and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you."

41. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt."

42. Then Pharaoh took his signet ring off his hand and put it on Joseph's hand; and he clothed him in fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck.

43. And he had him ride in a second chariot which he had; and they cried out before him, "Bow the knee!" So he set him over all the land of Egypt.

44. Pharaoh also said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no man may lift his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt."<sup>24</sup>

This is the narrative according to the Old Testament, which must be approached with extreme caution; it is merely stated here for the record. All of the aforesaid points iterated refute the *Shub'hāt* of the pseudo-Muslims that Yūsuf was actively participating in a non-Islamic government / ruling system that involved ruling / legislating with other than what *Allāh* has revealed.

Thus far we have two distinct viewpoints regarding the nature of Yūsuf's عليه السلام position and work within Egypt:

- ***The Minimalist Viewpoint -***

Yūsuf عليه السلام was only responsible for store-keeping, accounts and provision for the needy - a ruling of *Allāh ta 'ala* in every *Shari'ah*. Therefore it can be concluded that the essence of this work is administrative. If a present day ruler were to offer a position like this at a time of grave crisis, such as famine, one could (in theory) accept the position since it is administrative in nature and does not involve ruling and / or legislating with other than what *Allāh* has revealed. Such administrative tasks are considered to be within the area of *Mubāh* (permissibility). *Imām* Al-Marwardi has said: 'It is permissible for a Muslim under the ruling of *Kufr* to take non-ruling positions<sup>25</sup>. It is thus also permissible for a non-

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<sup>24</sup> Bible, NIV, Ch 41, Verses 37 / 44

<sup>25</sup> Sighted by *Imām* Abu'l Hasan al-Marwardi in the *Tafseer al-Qurtabi*, Vol.9, Pg 216.

Muslim within an Islamic state to have a non-ruling administrative position (on the proviso that it didn't involve any matter connected with national security).

- ***The Viewpoint of Total Authority -***

The King of Egypt gave Yūsuf عليه السلام full executive authority and power in the land, allowing Yūsuf to rule according his decree. Consequently, this would imply that Yūsuf عليه السلام would apply laws and rules of his own prerogative, and as a noble and purified Prophet of *Allāh ta 'ala*, these would necessarily be the revelation and directives by *Allāh ta 'ala*.

In light of the weight of evidence presented thus far, the sophism collapses. The sophist viewpoint concerning Yūsuf عليه السلام cannot be used as a justification for participation in a non-Islamic ruling system since both the *minimalist viewpoint* and the *viewpoint of total authority* are in stark contradiction to what the sophists actually have advanced. Notwithstanding this, neither of the sophist's viewpoints can be used as an authority because they do not indicate a firm conclusive reality. In fact neither viewpoints could be argued due to lack of certainty, thus with this loose evidence we are unable to establish a decisive ruling concerning the exact position and nature of Yūsuf's عليه السلام work in Egypt. However, our own inclination is with the minimalist viewpoint; namely, that Yūsuf was allocated an administrative position at the time of famine, and possibly he had other jobs but they were also most likely administrative, because in general, the Kings in antiquity were absolute rulers.



## Comparison of the Position of Yūsuf عليه السلام with Contemporary Political Realities

Yūsuf's عليه السلام participation in the Ministry of the King was by the will and decree of *Allāh ta 'ala*. He عليه السلام was given an unrestricted hand to rule at his Ministry. Both points are evident from the verse:

وَكَذَلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَتَّبِعُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ يَشَاءُ<sup>26</sup>

**“Thus did We establish Yūsuf in the land, to take possession therein as, when, or where he pleased...”<sup>26</sup>**

Yūsuf عليه السلام participated in the Ministry with complete authority from the King of Egypt. He عليه السلام had no opponent; no one could ask him about his works or actions. Imām At-Tabarī has narrated from Ibn Zayd concerning the aforesaid verse that:

*“We put him in authority over whatever was in it (i.e. Egypt), wherever he willed from that place. He did in it whatever he willed. It was granted to him.”<sup>27</sup>*

فَلَمَّا كَلَّمَهُ قَالَ إِنَّكَ الْيَوْمَ لَدَيْنَا مَكِينٌ أَمِينٌ<sup>28</sup>

**“Therefore when he had spoken to him, he said: ‘Verily, this day, you are with us high in rank and fully trusted’.”<sup>28</sup>**

With reference to the aforesaid verse, Imām Al-Qurtubī narrated that Ibn ‘Abbās said concerning Yūsuf عليه السلام:

*So he sat upon his bed and the Kings approached him. And the King entered his home with his women and the authority of Egypt was granted to him. And from what has come from Wahb and As-Suddī and Ibn ‘Abbās and others is the saying of the King to Yūsuf عليه السلام, when he saw his complete wisdom in implementing the ruling and spreading the justice:*

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<sup>26</sup> *Sūrat Yūsuf*: 56

<sup>27</sup> *Tafseer Al-Qurtubi*, Vol. 9, p. 215

<sup>28</sup> *Sūrat Yūsuf*: 54

*"I give you the authority, so do whatever you will. And we are merely your followers and I am not one to refuse being your subject and obeying you and I am no more than one of your subjects."*<sup>29</sup>

With this in mind, can there be any genuine comparison between the work of Yūsuf عليه السلام and the governmental offices of *Tāghūt* that exist today? No contemporary government allows an individual, whether a Minister or even the high officials of state, to occupy their position unless they swear undying loyalty to either the state (including its non-Islamic ideology) or the constitution. Moreover, no contemporary political system that is based upon the principles of *Tāghūt* would allow its destruction from within, since the *Deen* of *Islām* cannot be subservient to, or be subsumed by a system that does not recognize that ruling belongs to none but *Allāh*.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> To exemplify this point, one should consider the leader of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in Turkey: Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Although once considered an 'Islamist' by many commentators, upon becoming a member of the Turkish Parliament and Prime Minister, Mr Erdogan had to swear his allegiance to the Turkish constitution and pledge that he would uphold its fundamental tenets. It is widely known that the Turkish constitution is built upon the principles of secularism i.e. *Taghut* – all Islamic law is banished from state and society (which has been the case formerly since the first constitution was drafted in the 1920s); ruling and legislation is for the parliament and (behind the scenes) the armed forces, not Allah and His Divine texts.

## Did Yūsuf عليه السلام Level a False Accusation Against His Brother?

The chapter of Yūsuf عليه السلام includes an episode<sup>31</sup> where we are informed that the King's bowl is placed in his brother's bag. This is the only judicial matter that is narrated to us in the entire chapter. The *Qur'ān* informs us that this was at the behest of Yūsuf عليه السلام so as he could keep his brother with him in Egypt. Upon the discovery of the bowl (by what appears to be either servants and / or officials), Yūsuf's brothers try to distance themselves from what appears on face value to be theft.

The interpretation of these verses was quite difficult for many classical scholars because they could not comprehend how Yūsuf عليه السلام could have falsely accused his brother of theft, but this is obviously not the way it sounds as *Allāh ta 'ala* says:

كَذَلِكَ كِدْنَا لِيُوسُفَ

“Thus did We plan for Yūsuf...”<sup>32</sup>

So as can be seen from this *Āyah*, it was *Allāh ta 'ala* who planned the accusation of theft as *Allāh ta 'ala* can do as He pleases as He is the ultimate sovereign, exalted and Majestic, and we know Yūsuf would not undertake such a matter of his own will. The classical scholars being so sensitive towards this issue narrated the following concerning it:

*“That while Yūsuf was looking through the baggage of his brothers, he (Yūsuf) was making Astughfir (asking for forgiveness) after every bag”.*

Obviously Yūsuf عليه السلام had no reason to say *Astughfir*, but due to their sensitivity born of sincerity, they thought he would have hated what he had done, but it was *Allāh ta 'ala* who made the plan. It is notable that Islamic scholars of old would think about the Prophets at the highest level, not like many pseudo-Muslims who think the worse about the Prophets, like in this case, accusing Yūsuf عليه السلام of ruling by *Kufr* or arguing that the *Deen* of *Islām* ‘needs reform’ when their real desire is the wholesale change or abandonment of the *Deen*.

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<sup>31</sup> Refer to *Āyats* 69 / 83

<sup>32</sup> *Sūrat Yūsuf*: 76

Imām At-Tabarī has narrated the following:

Allāh ta' ala states:

فَبَدَأَ بِأَوْعِيَّتِهِمْ قَبْلَ وَعَاءِ أَخِيهِ ثُمَّ أَسْتَخْرَجَهَا مِنْ وَعَاءِ أَخِيهِ

**“So he began (the search) with their baggage, before (he came to) the baggage of his brother: at length he brought it out of his brother’s baggage.”<sup>33</sup>**

*Yūsuf عليه السلام started checking their baggage one by one, starting with the older one all the way down (Who are his half brothers from his father), and leaving his full brother until the last one, and then he found it in his full brother’s luggage.*

*Narrated Bisher, from Yazīd, who told us Sa’eed from Qatāda who said: The ‘Āyah of Allāh ta’ala:*

فَبَدَأَ بِأَوْعِيَّتِهِمْ قَبْلَ وَعَاءِ أَخِيهِ ثُمَّ أَسْتَخْرَجَهَا مِنْ وَعَاءِ أَخِيهِ

**“So he began (the search) with their baggage, before (he came to) the baggage of his brother: at length he brought it out of his brother’s baggage”.**

*It was told to us (concerning this ‘Āyah) that he was not looking in any luggage except he was saying Astughfirillah for what he has done, until he ended up with his youngest brother and said: ‘This one is too young, I don’t think he did anything’, the brothers then responded by saying ‘No, truth is evidence,’ so he (Yūsuf) took out the beaker of the King and they were all in shock.’*

*From Ma’mur from Qatāda who said: ‘He took out of the luggage of his brother, when he was checking the luggage of his other brother’s he was saying Astughfir every time until he reached the young boy, he said ‘I don’t think he did anything,’ the brother’s said ‘No, check him so we are proven innocent.’*

*From As-Sbut from As-Suddi who said: He (Yūsuf) started with them in order until he reached the boy and said ‘This boy is too young to do anything like that,’ they (his other brother’s) said ‘No, you have to check so that you are certain that nothing has happened,’ so he entered his hand (into the bag) and got the measure of the king.*

*Isḥāq said: When the Messenger (Yūsuf) approached (the brother’s of Yūsuf) he said - ‘Someone has stolen the measure of the King,’ they said, ‘We don’t know anything about that, and we have not seen it,’ he said ‘You will not leave until I have certainty that you do not have it and I have checked your entire luggage.’ So he started with their luggage one by one until he reached down to*

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<sup>33</sup> Sūrat Yūsuf: 76

his brother, then he grabbed him from his neck and took him away. And that was done by Allāh for him (Yūsuf).’<sup>34</sup>

Indeed, Allāh ta ‘ala’s statement is hereby exemplified:

كَذَلِكَ كِدْنَا لِيُوسُفَ

“Thus did We plan for Yūsuf...”<sup>35</sup>

If this wasn’t the statement of Allāh, and it was Yūsuf عليه السلام who accused his brother of theft, then this would be a big transgression knowing full well that his younger brother was totally innocent. Now the text of the *Qur’ān* is clear that it was Yūsuf عليه السلام who had placed the bowl of the King into the bag of his brother. We are also informed in ‘Āyah 69 that he took his brother to one side and told him that he is his real brother, and not to grieve. When the plan of Allāh came to fruition, Yūsuf’s عليه السلام younger brother would thus be quite relaxed, while the others were shocked. We are informed in the ‘Āyats of their reaction in detail and how they felt in a very difficult situation as they now had to account to their father (the Prophet Ya’qūb) that this is the second child that has been lost at their hands.

It is worth noting that causing shock to someone when no one is guilty of anything is totally impermissible in this present *Shari’a*. However, in this specific situation, permission was granted to Yūsuf عليه السلام to carry out an act that in any other time would be prohibited, but in this instance it was made permissible by the Creator and the only Lawgiver, Allāh the Exalted and Majestic, Blessed be His Names, and Holy be His Attributes. There is no specific instance like Yūsuf’s عليه السلام nowadays, so it cannot be repeated; for anyone to claim otherwise would be tantamount to claiming Prophet Hood, and this ‘*Ummah* is fully aware of the magnitude and gravity of such a claim.

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<sup>34</sup> *Tafseer at-Tabarī*, Vol.13, pg 23-26

<sup>35</sup> *Sūrat Yūsuf*: 76

## Did Yūsuf عليه السلام Make a Judgment to other than *Allāh*'s Ruling?

مَا كَانَ لِيَأْخُذَ أَخَاهُ فِي دِينِ الْمَلِكِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ

“He could not have taken his brother by the law of the king, except that *Allāh* willed it”.<sup>36</sup>

In explaining this *‘Āyah*, the *‘Ulema* said that according to the law that was prevalent in Egypt at that time, the thief was to receive a certain punishment, like paying twice the stolen amount or imprisonment etc. The *Shari’ah* of that time was markedly different both from this law in Egypt and indeed our own present *Shari’ah*. At that time, the victim (i.e. the one who had an item / article stolen from them) had the right to take the one guilty of theft as a slave, either for a certain period of time or otherwise.<sup>37</sup>

It was part of the plan decreed by *Allāh ta ‘ala* that Yūsuf عليه السلام wanted to take his brother, so he asked his other brethren what they would prescribe for an individual guilty of theft. In other words, knowing that his brothers are the children of Prophet Ya’qūb عليه السلام and knowing the prescribed *Shari’ah* for them, Yūsuf عليه السلام sought reference to, and judgment by that same *Shari’ah*, albeit under their (his brothers) unwitting consent. Therefore it is clear from the *‘Āyah* (and the plethora of *Tafseer* upon the matter) that Yūsuf عليه السلام did not refer to the rule that was prevalent in Egypt for judgment in this matter. Rather, the *Shari’ah* of *Islām* at that time was referred to for judgment and ruling.

The aforesaid *‘Āyat* could have two different meanings:

- It would not have been possible to take the boy if he had applied the King’s ruling, but he would have been permitted to apply the King’s ruling because that was permissible for him in that specific case, because even the accusation of theft as and of itself is not permissible in any *Shari’ah* and *Allāh ta ‘ala* permitted it. Even this is not an argument permitting ruling by *Kufr* as the whole situation is exceptional and miraculous!

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> *Tafseer Ibn Kathīr*, Vol.5, Pg 190 / 197

- Or it would not have been permissible for Yūsuf عليه السلام to apply to his brother the rule of the King because they should be submissive to the law of Ya'qūb عليه السلام, meaning Yūsuf عليه السلام would not apply *Kufr* in any case.

Hence neither interpretation is an argument to permit ruling by *Kufr* or the false accusation that Yūsuf عليه السلام was involved in ruling by *Kufr*.

## Did the King of Egypt Embrace *Islām*?

Another key tenet in the refutation of the sophist's arguments concerns what a number of narrators have said regarding the King of Egypt actually embracing *Islām*.

*Allāh ta 'ala* states:

وَكَذَلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَتَّبِعُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ يَشَاءُ<sup>٣٨</sup>

**“Thus did We establish Yūsuf in the land, to take possession therein as, when, or where he pleased”.**<sup>38</sup>

At a different juncture in the *Qur'ān* *Allāh ta 'ala* describes the situation of the believers whom He establishes (or gives authority to) in the land:

الَّذِينَ إِنْ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ<sup>٣٩</sup>  
وَلِلَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ ﴿٤١﴾

**“(They are) those who, if We establish them in the land, establish regular prayer and give regular charity, enjoin the right and forbid wrong; with *Allāh* rests the end (and decision) of (all) affairs”.**<sup>39</sup>

There can be no doubt regarding what *Allāh* has informed us of in *Āyah* 56, namely, that Yūsuf was one of those whom *Allāh ta 'ala* gave authority to in the land. Furthermore, anyone with an iota of intelligence would have to agree that the fundamental principle of *al-Islām* is *Tawheed* (monotheism) which Yūsuf عليه السلام and his father (may *Allāh ta 'ala* send peace and blessings upon them) called for, and the total opposite to *al-Islām* is *Shirk* (polytheism) which Yūsuf عليه السلام warned of, hated and completely rejected. There is a clear indication that after *Allāh ta 'ala* had given Yūsuf عليه السلام authority in the land, he followed the *Deen* of his forefathers - Yaqūb, Ishāq, Ibra'heem, etc. calling people to the purity of *Tawheed* and attacking anything that contradicted or disagreed with it.

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<sup>38</sup> *Sūrat Yūsuf*: 56

<sup>39</sup> *Sūrat Hajj*: 41



What were the words in which Yūsuf عليه السلام spoke to the king to make him kind to Yūsuf عليه السلام, to derogate authority to him, as well as to believe and fully trust him? Did Yūsuf talk to the king about the wife of his chief minister, which ended with the truth being made known? Perhaps Yūsuf عليه السلام spoke about the national unity or economic problem? No one can pretend to have knowledge of the unseen, or to say something without proof from the Divine texts. If he does, then he will be a liar.

With regards to the interpretation of verse:

فَلَمَّا كَلَّمَهُ

“Therefore when he had spoken to him...”<sup>40</sup>

This is illustrated by the statement of *Allāh ta ‘ala*:

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ

“And We have indeed sent to every nation a messenger (saying to his people): ‘Worship *Allāh* alone and avoid the *Ṭāghūt* (false deities)...”<sup>41</sup>

As well as in *Allāh ta ‘ala* saying:

وَلَقَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكَتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾

“It has been revealed to you, and to those before you: If you were to join (gods with *Allāh*), then truly fruitless will be your work (in life), and you will surely be in the ranks of those who lose (all spiritual good)”.<sup>42</sup>

And further through what we have of Yūsuf’s عليه السلام own narrative:

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<sup>40</sup> *Sūrat Yūsuf*: 54

<sup>41</sup> *Sūrat An-Nahl*: 36

<sup>42</sup> *Sūrat Az-Zumar*: 65

إِنِّي تَرَكْتُ مِلَّةَ قَوْمٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ كَافِرُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾ وَاتَّبَعْتُ مِلَّةَ آبَائِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ ۚ مَا كَانَ لَنَا أَنْ نُشْرِكَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

“...I have (I assure you) abandoned the religion of a people that believe not in *Allāh* and that (even) deny the Hereafter. And I follow the ways of my fathers, - Ibra’heem, Ishāq, and Yaqūb; and never could we attribute any partners whatsoever to *Allāh*: that (comes) of the grace of *Allāh* to us and to mankind: yet most men are not grateful”.<sup>43</sup>

And again in the *Qur’ān Al-Kareem*:

يَصْٰلِحٰى السِّجْنَ ؕ اَرْبَابٌ مُّتَفَرِّقُونَ خَيْرٌ اَمِ اللّٰهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ ﴿٦٩﴾ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ ؕ اِلَّا اَسْمَاءَ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا اَنْتُمْ وَاَبَاؤُكُمْ مَّا اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطٰنٍ ۚ اِنِ الْحُكْمُ اِلَّا لِلّٰهِ ؕ اَمَرَ اَلَّا تَعْبُدُوْا اِلَّا اِيَّاهُ ۚ ذٰلِكَ الدِّيْنُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٧٠﴾

“Oh my two companions of the prison! (I ask you): are many lords differing among themselves better, or the One *Allāh*, Supreme and Irresistible. If not Him, you worship nothing but names which you have named, - you and your fathers, - for which *Allāh* has sent down no authority: Ruling (Legislating, Governing, Judging, Commanding, etc) is for none but *Allāh*: He has commanded that you worship none but Him: that is the right Deen but most men know not”.<sup>44</sup>

Based upon the aforesaid evidences, it is thus arguable that the king of Egypt did indeed embrace *al-Islām*; agreeing with the *Tawheed* as expounded by Yūsuf عليه السلام and that of his predecessors, the Prophet’s Yaqūb and Ibra’heem. In light of this, the statement can be taken as an indication that the King did embrace *Islām*.

إِنَّكَ الْيَوْمَ لَدَيْنَا مَكِينٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿٧١﴾

“Verily, this day, you are with us high in rank and fully trusted”.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>43</sup> *Sūrat Yūsuf*: 37/38

<sup>44</sup> *Sūrat Yūsuf*: 39/40

Moreover, many of the classical scholars were of the view that that the weight of evidence does indicate that the King of Egypt embraced *Islām*. *Imām Al-Qurtubī* has said:

*And when the King gave the authority of Egypt to Yūsuf عليه السلام, he was generous to the people and called them to Islam until they believed in him and he established the justice amongst them. So the men and the women loved him.*<sup>46</sup>

*Ibn Jarīr At-Tabarī* narrated that *Mujāhid* said:

*“The King whom Yūsuf was with entered Islam”.*<sup>47</sup>

*al-Baghawī* said:

*Mujāhid and others said, “Yūsuf did not stop calling the King to Islām while being kind to him, until he and many of the people entered Islām”.*<sup>48</sup>

And to end with, we will narrate what *Imām al-Qurtubi* has related of the *Aḥkām* concerning participation in the governments which are set up by the *Tawagheet*, he says:

*“Some of the people of ‘Ilm have said in reference to this ‘Āyah that it is permissible for the righteous man to work for the Rajul-ul-Fājir (Wicked deceitful man) and the Sultān-ul-Kāfir (Tāghūt/disbelieving ruler) with the condition that he knows (with certitude) that he will be authorized to act independently in the specified area of responsibility, or jurisdiction, without interference or objection to change, reform and act at will according to that which is righteous. But if his work is based on the choice, decision or the wicked desires of the Rajul-ul-Fājir, then it is impermissible to carry out work for him.*

*Some (other people of ‘Ilm) have said that this referred specifically (and only) to Yūsuf, (so it does not apply to anybody else, and hence it is universally impermissible to carry out any work for such men of wickedness or Kufr). But the first point of view appears stronger, under the conditions stated, and Allāh ta ‘ala knows best.*

*Al-Mawardi said, “If the ruler was a Dthālim, the people (people of ‘Ilm i.e. the ‘Ulema) disagreed whether they (the subjects) should serve with him, so they split into in two groups:*

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<sup>45</sup> *Sūrat Yūsuf: 54*

<sup>46</sup> *Tafseer Al-Qurtubi, Vol.9, Pg 215 [Arabic edition]*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid, Vol. 9, Pg 217.*

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*

*The first group says that it is permissible to work in compliance with truth and justice because Yūsuf similarly did so for the pharaoh, and because everyone is only responsible for his actions and not for the actions of others (meaning the rulers).*

*The second group says that it is not permissible at all to work for the Dthālim, because this entails allegiance and support for him, and that the general public may misunderstand this as justification and recommendation for the Dthālim. This second group responded to the Yūsuf argument by saying: that the Pharaoh at Yūsuf's time was a righteous just man and that the wicked Pharaoh was the one in the story of Mūsa (a.s). They also say that Yūsuf only supervised the Pharaoh's wealth and provisions (acting only as a treasurer and storage manager) and distanced himself from the Pharaoh's actions, hence he is not accountable for them.*

*Al-Mawardi further says, "better than these two divisions is to perform a finer division according to the possible types of jurisdiction under the Dthālim, which fall under three categories:*

*First: What can be administered with Ijtihād in its execution like Zakāt and Sadaqah (charity). Such a responsibility can be taken under the Dthālim, because the definiteness of the text, in specifying who is entitled and who is not, has relieved us from performing Ijtihād and also the fact that those who are liable for Zakāt and/or Sadaqah could attend to it personally (without government involvement) which relieves us from the need to follow someone else's instructions.*

*Second: What cannot be managed independently and needs Ijtihād, like the Fay (spoils of war). It is not permissible at all to work under the Dthālim in such areas, because he (the Dthālim) does not act according to truth and justice and his Ijtihād cannot be trusted.*

*Third: What needs Ijtihād (from a qualified person), but could be performed independently (independent from the public authority) like many Furu' (branches) of the judiciary (arbitrator, justice of peace, mediators ...etc). It is permissible to work in such areas (for the Dthālim) if it is e.g. ruling between consenting parties, but if it is a one-sided enforcement (like the Police) then it is impermissible"<sup>49</sup>*

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<sup>49</sup> *Tafseer al-Qurtubi*, Vol.9, Pg 215-217.

## Conclusion

Upon detailed consideration of all the aforesaid evidences, we submit that the noble purified Messenger of *Allāh*, Yūsuf عليه السلام did not participate in ruling / legislating within a non-Islamic government / system. The mere suggestion that he did do this is completely false and a terrible accusation to level against the Messenger of *Allāh*. The weight of evidence as contained in the divine texts and expounded upon by reputable classical 'Ulema simply does not support the sophist proposition that it is permissible to participate in ruling and legislation in a non-Islamic government / ruling system with reference to the example of Yūsuf عليه السلام.

Unfortunately, the sophist argument that has been brought under consideration here is but one among many. The underlying premise that such arguments are based upon is that *Islām* is not complete and cannot function in the modern world unless it is diluted, reformed and has insidious foreign ideas worked into its doctrine and essence.

**May *Allāh*, the Exalted and Majestic, protect us from the satanic trap of ruling by anything except what He *ta 'ala* has revealed. The continuation of ruling and legislation by other than *al-Islām* is only prolonging the conflict, misery and injustice that plagues the contemporary world, and will undoubtedly place its practitioners in the fire of hell in the hereafter.**

لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ۚ مَا كَانَ حَدِيثًا يُفْتَرَىٰ وَلَكِن تَصْدِيقَ الَّذِي  
بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

***Indeed in their stories, there is a lesson for men of understanding. It (i.e. the Qur'ān) is not a forged statement but a confirmation of that which was before it and a detailed explanation of everything and a guide and a mercy for the people who believe***

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